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[For an analysis of agricultural extension activities in Negros Oriental, see category 116, pp. 436-448. --Analyst]

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Agricultural Extension Activities

The practice of agriculture in Caticugan, as here described, strongly supports the statement that "one of the most serious problems of the Philippines is the lag in the development and especially in the application of farm technology."[80]

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In 1951 Philippines' yield of rice per acre was the same as the yield in 1918; this was the lowest in Asia. In Caticugan there have been few basic changes in basic agricultural methods in the century. Some of the simplest techniques for improving yields have failed to reach the people. For example, the people still select rice and corn seed in the most primitive manner. The agricultural college at Los Baños has developed methods for improving corn and rice yields through better selection of seeds; these methods would not cost a centavo yet this information has not reached the people.

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The Philippine Government's neglect of agriculture, the basic industry and source of its wealth, has been scored by numerous critics and studies over the past several decades. Budget figures are one index to the indifference of most Filipino lawmakers to agriculture.

> In 1949, the gross national product, including disbursement of the United States, was over ₱5.0 billion. Of the total amount agriculture contributed 56 per cent, fisheries 6 per cent and forestry 3 per cent.

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[80] Robert T. McMillan, "Major Rural Problems in the Philippines and Suggested Solutions." Mimeographed copy of paper read at the 12th Biennial Convention of the National Federation of Women's Clubs, Manila, March 29, 1952, p. 2.

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> The most obvious thing about the whole Philippine economy, therefore, is the predominant position held by plant and animal production. Added to this is the striking fact that 75 per cent of the people are dependent on such production for their livelihood...
>
> ...For the fiscal year 1951, there was appropriated to the Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources for investigations in plant industry, animal industry, fisheries, and forestry the sum of Pl.2 million, about one-fourth of one per cent of the budget. Most of this will go into salaries, wages, travel, and miscellaneous expenses leaving but a minor part for actual experimental work. The fact is that for the basic informational needs of the industries that constitute the backbone of the entire economy, almost a negligible amount is provided in the national budget. When it is considered that Philippine agriculture is regarded by its most sincere friends as very backward and susceptible to quick improvements, the neglect of even elementary experimental work on which its advancement depends is difficult to understand.[81]

This section does not propose to examine the varied problems of Philippine agriculture. Within the last six years the ~~Philippine-United States~~ Agricultural Mission (1947), the Bell Mission (1950), Wernstedt's detailed study of Negros (1952) and Spencer's summary volume, Land and People in the Philippines (1952) have covered most aspects of this major problem. However, certain comments arise out of my research in Catiagan and Negros.

Table XXIII[1] gives the budgets of the provincial agriculture office of Negros Oriental over the past eight years.

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[81] The Bell Report, op. cit., pp. 58-9.

1 [See p. 438, cat. 654 + 242 -- Analyst]

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TABLE XXIII

Annual Budgets of the Provincial Agricultural Extension Service of Negros Oriental Province[82] (1945-1953)

Fiscal Year	1945-1946	1946-1947	1947-1948	1948-1949	1949-1950	1950-1951	1951-1952	1952-1953
Appropriation (dollars)	8818	17104	22672	24453	25783	24218	24957	34000

These funds come from provincial and municipal budgets and allotments from the national government. Commonwealth Act 85 (Section 1813-H as amended) states:

> Each municipality or municipal district shall annually set aside a sum of not less than THREE AND NOT MORE THAN FIVE per centum of its general fund, at the discretion of the Provincial Board and such provincial board shall set aside from its general fund a like sum which, together with the sums set aside by the municipalities and municipal districts under its jurisdiction shall constitute a special fund to be known as 'Agriculture Fund.'[83]

In 1950-51 the budget of provincial agriculture office of Negros Oriental was reduced. (See Table XXIII.) The reason reported was that the head of the office had fallen out of grace with certain members of the provincial board who determine the percentage of income devoted to the agriculture fund within the limits of Act 85. This budget reduction was said to have been made to "punish" the supervisor for his alleged "political transgressions."

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[82] Personal communication from the supervisor, September 30, 1952.

[83] The major sources of provincial and municipal income are taxes on income, real property, residence, inheritance, gifts and internal revenue allotments from national government; other sources of income are market and big animal registration fees, licenses, etc.

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In 1952-53 the agriculture office had less than eight cents for each person in the province for extension services. When one considers the cost of administrative activities, office supplies, transportation, repair of equipment, and other expenses, there was a pitiful meager amount left for agricultural extension activities. It is possible the newly-created Bureau of Agricultural Extension may solve some of these problems.[84]

The provincial agricultural supervisors' field agents are the municipal inspectors. The municipal inspectors' duties are to aid the provincial supervisors in extension activities and pest control, and to prepare reports on agricultural activities within their districts. Table XXIV[1] indicates the various agricultural districts of Negros Oriental in 1952, with the educational training and annual salaries of the municipal inspectors.

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[84] Under the new Bureau the country is to be divided into nine districts, each under a District Agriculturist who will be the superior of the Provincial Agriculturist (formerly the provincial agricultural supervisor) of each province. Luzon will have five districts, the Visayas (Eastern and Western) and Mindanao (Northern and Southern) two districts each.

1 [See p. 440, cat. 654 + 242 -- Analyst]

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TABLE XXIV

Education and Salaries:
Municipal Agricultural Inspectors - 1952[85]
Negros Oriental, Philippines

Agricultural Districts	Municipalities	Educational Attainment of Inspectors	Annual Salary ($)
I	Canlaon Vallehermoso	Mampising Agr. School	600
II	Guihulngan La Libertad	Central Luzon College	600
III	Jimalalud Tayasan Ayungon Tambo District	Central Luzon College	660
IV	Payabon Manjuyod	Central Luzon College	480
V	Bais Tanjay Pamplona	Central Luzon College	780
VI	Amlan Sibulan	Bukidnon Agr. School	450
VII	Valencia Bacong	Mampising Agr. School	660
VIII	Dauin Zamboanguita	Bukidnon Agr. School	450
IX	Siaton	Central Luzon College	540
X	Sta. Catalina Tolong	Central Luzon College	660
XI	Larena Siquijor	Central Luzon College	720
XII	San Juan Lazi	Lagangilang Agr. School	480
XIII	Maria E. Villanueva	Bukidnon Agr. School	540

An agronomist with three years training at Los Baños served Dumaguete (Agricultural District No. XIV) at an annual salary of $900.

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[85] Figures furnished by the Provincial Agricultural Office, Dumaguete, Negros Oriental, 1952.

Table XXV illustrates the estimated square acres and acres of cultivated land of the three largest agricultural districts each of whom have only one municipal agriculture agent. 654 242

TABLE XXV

Total Area and Cultivated Area, Three Agricultural Districts, Negros Oriental, 1951

Agricultural District	Estimated Total Area Acres	Estimated Cultivated Land (Acres)
No. III (Jimalalud, Tayasan, Ayungon, Tambo District)	332,800	32,581
No. V (Bais, Tanjay, Pamplona)	100,960	23,628
No. I (Sta. Catalina, Tolong)	77,440	21,527

When transportation and communication difficulties of municipal inspectors are considered and administrative and reporting duties remembered, the most ambitious and tireless inspector can not effectively perform his duties when his responsibilities encompass such large areas. The municipal inspector of Agricultural District No. V has to make three separate municipal reports since his district comprises three municipalities. Living in one municipality, an inspector is unable to supervise closely extension services in the other municipalities.

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The municipal inspector of Siaton (Agricultural District No. IX)[1] was unknown to the majority of the barriofolk in the Siaton River valley. During my residence the inspector did not come once to Caticugan; he spent much of his time in the poblacion working on his new residence. Prior to my arrival, the inspector had given a talk to the people of Caticugan in the barrio school but this meeting was arranged on the teacher's initiative. The principal of the elementary school frequently requested the inspector to talk to the students but he never appeared; he was very shy about speaking in public.

The inspector's office was a desk in Siaton post-office. A few bottles of seeds, some dusty charts indicating the alleged increase in corn and rice yields, and a few snail shells comprised his "educational" display. He had several stacks of illustrated pamphlets in Tagalog regarding the control of rats and improved methods of pig production produced by the United States Information Service. It is not fair to criticize him for failing to distribute these pamphlets in a Cebuano-speaking area. Getting materials from the provincial to the municipal centers is not as difficult as supervising their distribution in the barrios; this is the crucial and the weakest link in the distributional process of Philippine agricultural extension activities.

For the most part, such agricultural extension activities as the value of fertilizer, better seed

1 [See Table XXIV, p. 440, cat. 654 or 242 -- Analyst]

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selection methods, pest control or demonstration areas did not exist in Siaton, I made extensive inquiries about such activities. The municipal inspector had made a sign for one "fertilizer demonstration area." This "demonstration area" was in Goshen (also called Common; the name was changed to Goshen when it was settled by a group of Seventh Day Adventists), an isolated sitio of Barrio Apoloy. The owner of the land, a provincial official, had purchased a few bags of ammonium sulphate in Dumaguete for his fields. Common is a sitio of perhaps two dozen families located a full day's walk north of the National Road, at the very fringe of the settled region of the upper Siaton River valley. Few farmers saw this alleged "demonstration area."

Fertilizer under the former ECA program began to reach Siaton in 1952. The provincial agricultural supervisor reported that by September, 1952, 152 bags of fertilizer were sold to residents of Siaton municipality; two farmers in Caticugan purchased some of this fertilizer. Of the 6,500 bags of fertilizer distributed in Negros Oriental, 80 per cent were sold on a three-month credit plan. The regulation set for the distribution of fertilizer is to limit individual users to nine bags. If a farmer were working 25 acres he could purchase fertilizer sufficient to fertilize about one-third of his field. While this regulation prevents the fertilizer from falling into the hands of the few, and educates some barrio farmers on the value of fertilizer, it also defeats one

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purpose of the fertilizer distribution--increase food production. In Siaton the fertilizer was used on corn fields; owners of paddies were watching to see results in the fertilized corn fields before they purchased fertilizer.

The municipal agent said a "seed selection demonstration area" had been established in another Siaton barrio. When I checked with the people living in this barrio they had never heard of such a project. Moreover, none of them knew the agent's name! There is less justification for inactivity in this aspect of extension work than efforts to induce the people to use fertilizers. Better seed selection methods would cost the barriofolk nothing and demonstration areas could easily be arranged even with the admittedly inadequate funds of the municipal agent.

Extension activities on the part of the provincial agriculture office were often ineffective due to inadequate funds and insufficient personnel. To the writer's knowledge neither the provincial agricultural supervisor nor his assistant visited Siaton during 1951. Articles regarding improved agricultural practices were printed in English in the weekly newspaper, Vanguard, published in Dumaguete, with an estimated circulation of one thousand.[86]

[86] Jose C. Balein, "Provincial Newspapers in the Philippines," This Week; Manila Chronicle Sunday Supplement, VII, No. 10 (March 9, 1952), p. 13.

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It would have been better to print the articles in Cebuano but no funds were available to pay a translator.

Agricultural extension publications issued by the Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources, located in Manila, are printed in English; this limits their effectiveness in most rural areas. The provincial agricultural supervisor of Negros Oriental told me: "The bulletins and circulars in English have to be translated by the extension workers into the native dialect before they can be of real use in the locality." Since there are no funds for translation and printing of the translated circulars, information that comes from the Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources rarely reached Caticugan barriofolk. The high rate of illiteracy and relatively inefficient distribution system limits the effectiveness of even translated circulars.[87]

Agricultural conditions and techniques in Siaton, in general, and Caticugan, in particular, underline the urgent need of improving extension activities in the Philippines. As the Bell Report bluntly states:

> The neglect of experimental work is serious enough, but the lack of an efficient agricultural extension service is even more lamentable for there is much useful information already available which could be put into practice.[88]

While getting information to the barriofolk does not mean they will immediately accept new techniques and

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[87] A recent survey states the rate of illiteracy in Negros Oriental has been reduced from 53.6 per cent (1948) to 28.6 per cent; however, this estimate must be accepted with reservations. Tomas de Castro "The Community Schools of Negros Oriental," Philippine Journal of Education, January 1954, pp. 432 et seq.; cited in Far East Digest, Nos. 82 and 83, (March, 1954), p. 24.

[88] The Bell Report, op. cit., p. 59.

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equipment, it is the giant step needed in Caticugan.[89]

Agricultural extension officials could use more imagination. Literature to be circulated among the barriofolk should be made attractive for other reasons than farming propaganda. In the United States jellies are often sold in attractive glasses that housewives buy for the glass rather than the jelly--and later learn to like the jelly. A similar approach might be used in spreading farming information among the barriofolk.

The young men and women in Caticugan are eager to learn the lyrics of new American and Philippine song hits. Though the barriofolk rarely buy magazines, some do purchase Song Hits which contains the words of new popular songs. The magazine passes from hand to hand and the readers often memorized pages of lyrics. Extension literature that included the lyrics of latest song hits on one side and farm information on the other would be in great demand by the younger people--the future farmers.

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[89] The agricultural extension service must do more than get information to the barriofolk; they must recognize the various problems of inducing innovation and use the accumulating knowledge of cultural dynamics. Eggan's comments on the recent Bell Report are particularly pertinent. He writes that many of the recommendations of this report in regard to agricultural improvements have been tried before and the necessary laws passed but "In most instances, the failures are due to social and cultural factors rather than to lack of technical knowledge and skill." Fred Eggan, "The Philippines and the Bell Report," Human Organization, X, No. 1, (Spring, 1951), pp. 16-21.

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If printed in the local dialect the pamphlets would be hoarded or passed among friends, and would reach many of the isolated barrios of Siaton municipality.

In agricultural extension services films can be very effective. The barriofolk are fond of motion pictures although they rarely see them. The establishing by the agriculture department of mobile film units for extension services for the entire Philippines might be very expensive. However, some mobile film units already exist in many of the islands that the department could utilize. Several times during my residence mobile film units came to Siaton poblacion advertising various Philippine products. The truck would drive around the poblacion and announce through loudspeakers that a free program of sound films would be shown that evening in the plaza; sometimes 200 to 300 people turned out. The program consisted of films praising the product of the sponsor, and outdated American shorts or cartoons.

If the agriculture department produced entertaining shorts on various aspects of agriculture, the films could be distributed to these agencies for inclusion in their programs in the provinces. Often the language of Philippine films shown by these traveling cinemas was Tagalog. Films prepared by the agriculture department should be in the principal dialect of each region. The Philippine film industry is quite capable of producing such films.

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While the majority of the barriofolk are conservative and uneducated, they are not dull-witted, and already have adopted new ways. The younger generation will be easier to work with. Yet they will have to be convinced before they make any drastic changes--barring the use of coercion. Since the printed word is usually a mystery or carries little conviction, they must be able to see with their own eyes. On the whole, from their point of view, the tried and tested ways of their ancestors have proven fairly satisfactory and are not as "primitive" as claimed. The new ways, for all their promises of more abundant harvests, may fail and leave empty corn baskets. In agriculture, the barriofolk have small margin of safety.